

June is Home Safety Month

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Take a Hands-On Approach to Home Safety

If you ask most Americans where they feel safest, most will say their homes. Of course, our homes are our havens. They are also where accidents occur, resulting in nearly 21 million medical visits on average each year. The Home Safety Council dedicates the month of June - Home Safety Month – to educating and empowering families to make their homes safer.

There are simple things you can do to help save lives and prevent injuries. With just a few minutes and your own hands, you and your loved ones can avoid serious and costly injuries. If you install the right products and do some simple planning, you can make your home a safer place.

These are a few actions you can take today to make a difference in your home this summer.

Falls

Did you know that falls are the leading cause of emergency room visits among children and are the leading cause of injury and deaths among older adults?

- Install grab bars in the tub and shower.
- Provide bright lights over stairs and steps and on landings.
- Secure handrails on both sides of the stairs and steps.
- Use a ladder for climbing instead of a stool or furniture.
- Use baby gates at the top and bottom of the stairs, if babies or toddlers live in or visit your home.

Poisonings

Did you know that poison kills one out of four people who die in their homes every year? Be smart about where and how to store poisons, especially in homes where children live or visit.

- Lock poisons, cleaners, medications and all dangerous items in a place where children can't reach them.
- Keep all cleaners in their original containers. Do not mix them together.

- Use medications carefully. Follow the directions.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors near sleeping areas.
- Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 if someone takes poison. This number will connect you to emergency help in your area.

Fires/Burns

Did you know that working smoke alarms cut your family's risk of dying in a home fire almost in half? Protect your loved ones from fires and burns in the home.

- Have working smoke alarms and hold fire drills. If you are building a new home or remodeling, install fire sprinklers.
- Stay by the stove when cooking, especially when you are frying food.
- If you smoke, smoke outside. Use deep ashtrays and put water in them before you empty them.
- Only light candles when an adult is in the room. Blow the candle out if you leave the room or go to sleep.

Prevent Choking and Suffocation

Did you know that half of children who die before age one die from choking or suffocation? Little things can be dangerous in little hands.

- Keep coins, latex balloons and hard round foods, such as peanuts and hard candy, out of children's reach
- Don't put pillows, comforters or toys in cribs. These can suffocate children.
- Clip the loops in window cords and place them up high where children can't get them.
- Read the labels on toys. Be sure that your child is old enough to play with them.
- Tell children to sit down when they eat and to take small bites.

Be Smart Around Water

Did you know that children can die in as little as an inch of water in just a few minutes? Water can be dangerous for young children.

- Stay within an arm's length of children in and around water. This includes the bathtub, toilet, pools and spas & even buckets of water.
- Put a fence all the way around your pool or spa.
- Empty large buckets and wading pools after using them. Keep them upside down when you are not using them.
- Make sure your children always swim with a buddy. No child or adult should swim alone.
- Keep your hot water at 120 degrees F or just below the medium setting to prevent burns.

Keep Disaster Preparedness in Mind

However difficult a disaster may be to predict, one thing is for sure, we can all be ready when they do happen.

- Have a communication plan with your family
- Decide on a place to meet
- Gather key phone numbers and contact information
- Help your children feel safe
- Discuss different types of weather
- Tell your children that you or another grownup will be there to help
- Put a list of emergency numbers by each phone in the home
- Have "Ready Kits"
- Have supplies handy if you need to stay at home
- Have supplies handy if you need to leave your home

Consider your home's danger areas and take these simple steps to create a safer environment and reduce your family's risk from potential injuries and disasters. Taking a hands-on approach to keeping loved ones safe at home is easy and does not require a lot of time or money. Insure your home is indeed your haven, keep it safe.

Visit the Home Safety Resource Center at www.homesafetycouncil.org or go to www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth to review and download free information, including posters, brochures, safety checklists and additional tips to help safeguard your family.